

In Case of Emergency (ICE) program update

Date:	November 6, 2007
To:	Community Development & Recreation
From:	Chief and General Manager, Toronto EMS
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

At its meeting of July 3, 2007, Community Development & Recreation Committee received for information a staff report from the Chief and General Manager of Toronto EMS in response to a letter and recommendation from Councillor Ootes. The staff report outlined a plan to implement the ICE program in an efficient and economical way.

ICE is a simple program that educates people to store an emergency contact phone number under the common name - ICE. In the event of an emergency, responders can quickly access the patient's emergency contact information. In July 2007, Toronto Emergency Medical Services (EMS) updated its website to include a description of ICE and communicated this to its program partners as well as Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Police Services. In October 2007, Toronto EMS worked with CFTO to develop an educational news story for the public regarding ICE that aired on the evening news.

The ICE cell phone program fits well with other Toronto EMS safe city programs such as Window and Balcony safety, Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) and citizen first aid and will continue to be promoted and rolled out in the future.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

DECISION HISTORY

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-5124.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The ICE program was conceived by a paramedic who saw the potential in using the patient's own cell phone to contact next of kin. This could be accomplished if such phone numbers were simply stored under a common name that first responders could identify with. The concept for ICE was born.

COMMENTS

Toronto EMS provides public education in many areas to keep citizens safe and free from preventable injuries. Programs such as Safe City, Window and Balcony safety, citizen first aid and Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) would be complemented by the ICE program because next of kin could be notified sooner and in some cases, medication/medical history could be provided. In addition, language barriers could be overcome if the cell phone was programmed to an individual that spoke English.

The ICE program offers many benefits to EMS and fits well with our public education initiatives. As a first step, EMS updated its website in July 2007 to include a description of the ICE cell phone program. As described in the staff report (#CD 7.3) to the July 3, 2007 meeting of Community Development & Recreation Committee, EMS will continue to promote ICE with their program partners as well as Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Police Services. On October 21, 2007, CFTO ran a story on the evening news regarding ICE that was developed in conjunction with EMS. In the future, the ICE program will continue to be rolled out using cost effective methods such as printable wallet inserts and refrigerator pin-ups.

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